

# THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT:

*The Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians*

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No. 359.

FEBRUARY, 1929.

Published Monthly.

## PRINCIPAL CONTENTS.

Editorials and Announcements	...	...	...	...	...	21
Bibliographical Collation: by R. N. Thomas	...	...	...	...	...	24
About Steel Furniture: by R. Partridge	...	...	...	...	...	27
Local Collections: by F. Toone	...	...	...	...	...	29
Notes on Books and Authors, III.: by Benjamin C. Jones	...	...	...	...	...	34
The Divisions	...	...	...	...	...	35
Our Library	...	...	...	...	...	37
Short Notices	...	...	...	...	...	38
New Members	...	...	...	...	...	40
Appointments	...	...	...	...	...	40

## EDITORIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

**The Next Meeting of the Association**, which will be a joint meeting with the London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association, will be held at the Southlands Branch Library, High Street, Battersea, S.W.11, on February 13th, at 6.30 p.m. The first half hour will be occupied with the preliminary business, and then the following papers will be given:—

“The Union Catalogue of London Libraries,” by Mr. F. Seymour Smith, Bethnal Green Library.

“Modern Library Binding and Book Papers,” by Mr. John Warner, Librarian of Newport (Mon.).

The Chair will be taken by Mr. A. Webb, Brighton, President of the A.A.L.

The Junior Section will meet at 6.30 p.m., when Mr. M. Pummell, Fulham Public Libraries, will read a paper on “The Modern Assistant Librarian.”

**The Next Meeting of the Council** will be held at Battersea Central Library, on Wednesday, February 13th, at 3 p.m.

**An Appeal** to all librarians and assistants who have unbound copies of the “Library Association Record,” volumes 1 to 14, which they have little use for, has been made by the Education Committee. The donation of copies will materially

assist the Honorary Librarian to satisfy the demands made by students for the loan of single copies for examination purposes. The gifts should be sent to Miss Toms, c/o Central Public Library, Holloway Road, N.7, and postage incurred will be readily refunded.

**A Public Lecture** by Mr. B. M. Headicar, on "A Bibliography of Political Economy, Methods and Construction, and Plans for keeping up-to-date," will be given on February 13th, at 5.30 p.m., at University College, Gower Street, W.C.1.

**Co-operation between Public Libraries in Norfolk and Suffolk.** At a conference recently held at the Central Library, Norwich, attended by Chairmen and Librarians representing the Library authorities of Ipswich, King's Lynn, Lowestoft, Norwich, and Great Yarmouth, it was unanimously resolved that co-operation between the Public Libraries of Norfolk and Suffolk would be mutually advantageous, and that the library committees of the boroughs concerned should be urged to agree to a scheme of close co-operation. In broad outline, the scheme proposed that borrowers' tickets issued by any of the co-operating libraries should be interchangeable; that, under certain agreed conditions, any one of the libraries should lend books in the Lending and Reference Libraries to other Libraries at a uniform charge per book; and that any library purchasing an important and expensive work not likely to be in great demand, should make known its purchase to the other libraries, thus avoiding unnecessary duplication of such books within the area. It was also suggested that librarians of the associated Libraries should meet from time to time to discuss and develop methods of co-operation.

It is a matter of gratification to note that all the library committees concerned have signified their unqualified approval of the scheme, which came into operation on January 1st, 1929. This is the first time that a scheme of co-operation on such definite lines has been adopted in England, but we sincerely trust that similar schemes will soon be in operation all over the country, even among those strongholds of "watertight" methods, the Metropolitan Boroughs.

**Leeds Public Libraries** have once more enlarged the next revised edition of Brown's "Manual," by launching an admirable innovation which is worthy of imitation everywhere. In order to prevent the child reader from drifting away from books when he drifts away from school, an open letter is sent to the parents of every boy leaving school, in which attention is

drawn to the great need for their child to continue his reading, etc. Attached to the letter by perforation is a borrower's application form. We presume a record will be kept of all forms received at the library again as a consequence of this letter. If so, we should be glad to learn at some future date of the numerical result of this excellent idea.

**The Draft Plan** for the amalgamation of the Library Association and the Association of Assistant Librarians, which was submitted to the Council recently by the Library Association was the subject of searching examination and enquiry at the last Council meeting, held by the kind permission of Mr. W. H. Parker, at Hackney, on January 9th. A number of constructive proposals were made by members of the Council, great help being obtained from numerous letters received from provincial members who were unable to attend. The President, to whom the journey from and to Brighton seems to hold no terrors, was materially aided in his task of directing the discussion into constructive channels by the courteous hospitality of Mr. Bussey. The President, the Hon. Secretary, the Hon. Treasurer, Miss Appleby and Messrs, Chubb and Cooper were chosen to represent the Council in the discussions which will shortly take place with selected representatives of the L.A. Council.

**The December and January Meetings.** An account of the December meeting of the Association at Lambeth was unfortunately held over last month, but we are glad to be able to report now that the large number of members who came to see the new developments in the Central Library, and to hear Mr. T. E. Callender on "Public Libraries from the Economic Aspect," had one of the most pleasant meetings of the year. The afternoon was spent in the inspection of the United Dairies Streatham Depôt, to the Management of which the Association are under great obligation for the trouble to which they went in showing their wonderful distribution centre, and for their courteous invitation to tea. At 7.30 p.m., Mr. Callender gave a most witty and refreshing paper, Mr. Packington, the Chief Librarian, being in the chair.

The January meeting of the Association was held at the Hackney Town Hall. Following a very successful gathering of the Junior Section, before which Miss M. J. Page read a paper on "Some Light on the Publishing Practice," Mr. Maurice Marston, Organising Secretary of the National Book Council, addressed the Association on "The Work of the National Book Council and its Importance to Librarians."

In beginning his address, Mr. Marston observed that he had accepted the Association's invitation only with a great deal of misgivings, as it

appeared to him that he had more to learn from Librarians than they could ever expect to learn from him. In this respect it comforted him considerably when he recalled Mr. Jast's observation at the Edinburgh Annual Conference that at least it could be said that the National Book Council was not doing any harm. The realisation that he was not doing Manchester any harm was the greatest encouragement to him to proceed in his endeavours.

These endeavours, he explained, are based on the backward position of books in the march of Civilisation. It is the aim of the National Book Council to spread the love of reading and thus to inculcate the love of books, and by the issue of bibliographies and Readers' guides to show the public what books suitable to their tastes are available for purchase. The fact that their desire is to inculcate a love of reading as a step towards the selling of more books, need not cause Librarians any great concern. The immediate aims of both are the same even if their ultimate objectives are different, and the Book Council on that account deserves all the support Librarians can give.

The National Book Council is only a trade concern in so far as it owes its inception to a group of publishers, and its membership is confined to authors, publishers and booksellers; Associate membership is open to everybody, and the Trade element is now outnumbered by three to one. The bibliographies issued from time to time are prepared quite independently by the bodies whose names appear at their head, and none of the publishers know what books are to appear on each list until these are actually issued. The Readers' Guide is issued on a different plan. In this case each publisher is responsible for the remarks concerning his own publications, but it was the opinion of Mr. Marston that so far these have not been unduly laudatory.

In the discussion that followed, Messrs. Parker, O'Leary, Jones, Moore, Vale, and R. O. H. Smith took part, the chief point elicited from Mr. Marston in his reply being that the Council is considering the annotation of its bibliographies, and undoubtedly this will be done in time. Altogether, the address and subsequent discussion proved of the greatest interest, and Mr. Sandry, in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Marston, echoed the feelings of all who had the good fortune to be present.

This was the Association's third meeting at Hackney, and the first since 1912. The Mayor of Hackney and the Chief Librarian (Mr. W. H. Parker), welcomed us very pleasantly, and through Mr. Gurner Jones and the President, we expressed our grateful thanks for the warmth of our reception and the excellent arrangements made for our entertainment and comfort.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL COLLATION.\*

By R. N. THOMAS.

(Poplar Public Libraries).

When dealing with early printed books the terms "Edition" and "Impression" both mean, more or less, the same thing. After printing an edition of a work the printer usually distributed his type, and if a reprint was called for the whole had to be re-set, thus creating a new edition. With old books

\*A paper read at the Junior Meeting held on May 16th, 1928, at Brentford, continued from page 15.

copies of the same edition may vary, however, by the correction of misprints or the making of new ones while the book was in the press, or again by the substitution of cancels when mistakes or indiscretions had been noted after the edition was printed. Such variations certainly do not constitute different editions, as used to be assumed, they do not even constitute different issues, although they are sometimes so classed. To-day an "Edition" might be defined as "the whole of the number of copies of a work printed at any time or times from one setting-up of type (including copies printed from stereotype and other plates made from that particular set-up of type), and an "Impression" as "the whole of the number of copies of a work printed at any one time" (i.e., the copies printed without the type or plates having been removed from the press).

Various irregularities occur, however, which make the determination of edition, etc., and collation in general difficult. Of these irregularities "Cancels" are one of the most known. A Cancel, which is printed and inserted to replace matter in which some serious error or indiscretion has occurred, can be anything from a small strip pasted over the mistake to a considerable portion of a book. The most common form is the single leaf, usually stuck on to a stub of the old leaf. The term Cancel is loosely applied, however, both to the leaf withdrawn and to the one which replaces it, and to avoid confusion it would be better if they were known, respectively, as "cancelled" and "cancelling" leaves. Proper Latin terms (Cancellandum—original; and Cancelland—cancelling) do exist but are rarely used. Sometimes (*Troilus and Cressida*, 1609, e.g.) two leaves have been inserted to cancel one. Where this has been done the section is, of course, irregular and suspicious, though such might be the result of MS having been badly divided between compositors, as will be mentioned later. One bibliographer records that of all the 18th century books he has collated one in every four or five contains at least one cancelled leaf. The undated title-page, and the absence of lists of contents, illustrations, maps and diagrams, or index are other not infrequent irregularities. The *Encyclopædia Britannica*, e.g., though very well illustrated with plates, maps and diagrams, contains no list of them. Then, in some early printed books there are type errors caused by the incorrect replacement of types which have become misplaced through insecure locking-up and the crude method of inking with ball-shaped pads. Another type irregularity in early books is that of blank or only partly filled pages. To minimise delay the type for large

books was often composed by several compositors and printed by several presses, and any compositor unable to finish his allowance of matter at the end of a complete sheet would leave a blank page or so, or insert a leaf and use all or only part of it. "Hic nullus est defectus" (meaning "there is no defect") was occasionally added in such cases, but, where it was not, the only remedy is a careful examination of the text and a comparison with other copies of that edition to see that nothing has been omitted. The blank leaves were sometimes removed, however, and the difficulty of collation thus increased. Then, some books are without Colophon, Printer's Imprint, the word "Finis" or "The End," or some other sign indicative of conclusion, and this sometimes causes doubt as to their completion. Irregular quiring, in which the constitutions of the various sections differ, is also met. Another irregularity is inconsistency of paper. After printing a book on thin paper and finding that its size was not as large as desired, a printer sometimes reprinted it on thicker paper and by alternating or otherwise mixing the sections "swelled" the book, and, of course, the edition too. In other cases books were originally printed on odd makes of paper. The "making-up" of incomplete books with pages from other copies (themselves deficient in some respect, and not infrequently of another edition), or with leaves that are facsimiles is also encountered. The inserted leaves in "made-up" books usually defy detection, they are so well put in, but proof of them can often be found in the difference of the height, colour, or texture of the paper, in their watermarks or chainlines not corresponding, or, in very early books, by the rubrication or other ornamentation being of a different style. Also, facsimiles, which are done by hand, are frequently so well made that they cannot be detected without the aid of a powerful glass. With a suspected facsimile closely study the paper, it rarely corresponds. In the case of cancels, or leaves from other copies of the same edition, the texture is usually identical, as these have probably been printed from the same stock of paper, but this is not so with facsimiles. Scrutinise and compare the type also. Some books contain two half-titles, others have none. Then, the question of size enters into the subject of Collation, and I have explained how the different sizes, folio, quarto., etc., are determined by the folding of the original sheet of paper. Formerly these terms indicated actual dimensions of pages because all hand-made paper was uniformly produced. In the case of modern books printed on machine-made paper this does not apply ; differences exist between paper machines, and the

terms now only roughly indicate measurement. The best indication of measurement in Description is that introduced by Henry Bradshaw, in which both "linear" and "form" sizes are recorded; Qto 7 by 10, e.g., meaning that the book is quarto by folding and that its actual page measurement is ten inches by seven.

The term "uncut" means that the edges of a book have not been guillotined. It does not mean that the "bolts" formed by the folding of the sheet, have not been "opened," but that the binder, conscious of the value and importance of certain books, has "kept his shears in his pocket." The value of a book is reduced by its being guillotined, in some instances considerably. Writing of old books in his "Book Collecting," J. H. Slater says that 50 to 75 per cent. is often the reduction, but that some books lose their entire value.

The difficulties of Collation would be considerably minimised if publishers could be induced to print in every book, say on the back or at the foot of the title-page, its own collation and description expressed in a standard way. It would be simple to do, but little trouble and expense to the publisher, yet be of inestimable value to librarians, bibliographers, book-sellers and collectors.

### ABOUT STEEL FURNITURE.

By ROBERT PARTRIDGE, A.L.A.

(Bermondsey Public Library).

Steel furniture, painted to represent wood, has lately come into prominence as a rival to the orthodox oak and mahogany equipment of the modern public library. Although it must be admitted that steel has many very obvious advantages, yet both from the aesthetic and practical point of view, it is not entirely satisfactory. It is, however, rapidly gaining favour in many libraries.

The durability of steel is, of course, known to everyone. The manufacturers of steel furniture claim that it has every appearance of ordinary furniture plus the additional advantages of steel, and that therefore it is ideal from every point of view. They claim for it indestructibility by fire (forgetting that red-hot metal would burn books and floor alike), cheapness, smartness, and durability. Steel bookcases, they say, harbour less dust; allow the circulation of more light and air to the books; are more economical of space, since four-feet shelves are quite practicable; are insect-proof, and so on.

No mention is made of the fact, however, that steel is nearly always disagreeably cold to the touch; that steel fittings, particularly those in sliding steel cabinets and bookcases, after a time, will squeak on being moved, and that in hot weather they have a tendency to jam; that steel is apt, on misty or rainy days, to attract a clammy moisture on its surface; that whether it be painted to imitate wood or not, steel furniture always has a commercial look about it, something always formal and business-like.

This is just the effect that modern librarianship most certainly wishes to eradicate. Public libraries have suffered from too much formality and frigidity in the past. Our aim now is to produce, by every means in our power, a homely, cosy atmosphere. Everyone can see, or at least realise directly one of these articles of furniture is touched, that it is made of steel. Consequently, steel furniture destroys, unconsciously perhaps, that subtle atmosphere of comfort we are attempting to create.

No matter what the manufacturers may say, nobody can sit on a steel chair, for example, with the same ease as is derived from a comfortable wooden reference library arm-chair. It is scarcely feasible that such warm, human thoughts as were born of the pen of Dante could have been written on the cold, unsympathetic surface of a steel table-top.

Steel can be scratched as easily as wood, but with far more disastrous results to its appearance. It is questionable also whether it can be renovated as easily as wooden furniture.

There is, too, a certain hollowness about steel furniture that carries with it two obvious disadvantages. Good, substantial wooden furniture has an inherent solidness that in itself proves an effectual deadener of sound, whereas there is an ever-present resonance with steel furniture, reminiscent of iron trunks and metal cash boxes, which tends to accentuate sounds, rather than deaden them. Furthermore, steel chairs and tables, being lighter than those of solid wood, have a tendency to be more easily disarranged when knocked against accidentally.

In the writer's opinion, therefore, nothing is more suitable for library furnishing than dark fumed oak or mahogany. Steel belongs to the stack-room, the commercial and technical library, the cataloguing and work-rooms. It should never be seen, for the reasons given above, in any of the rooms frequented by the public.

## THE VALUE AND SCOPE OF LOCAL COLLECTIONS IN LIBRARY.\*

By FLORENCE TOONE.

(Leamington Public Library).

The most necessary work of the Library, after it has formed its general collection, is to collect local literature. Most Public Libraries, however small, possess some kind of special collection, and careful consideration should be given to this branch of work.

Every town should aim at getting as complete a collection as possible of local historic matter, and this collection may be arranged under the following headings :—

- a. Printed Records.
- b. Written Records.
- c. Pictorial and Engraved Records.

The two latter are collected chiefly because they are records, although some people might think they belonged to the Museum or Art Gallery, but where there is only a Library in the town it should be the Librarian's aim to collect everything. Nothing relating to the district should be destroyed or discarded, as often its value is considerably increased when brought into relation with other material.

The general rule, then, is to collect everything and to leave it to posterity to find out its value, and to remember that records of to-day will be the history of to-morrow, and that anything throwing light on the happenings of our own times will become very valuable in the future.

Where is the local historian, the enquirer into social conditions, not to mention the genealogist, the biographer, the topographer and similar workers, to go for material? It is here that the Library strengthens its claim to general usefulness by collecting the material needed for these people.

One of the many advantages of local collections is the facility they afford for studying local history. Everyone should take an interest in the city, town, or parish where he lives, and I am sure that everyone would be a better citizen for knowing how the place in which he lives has risen to its present state; how from a small village it has become a busy town, or how, on the other hand, it has decayed, and the causes that have led to its decay.

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\*Prize Thesis in the 1928 Competition for the £15 Annual Scholarship awarded by the Birmingham and District Library Association.

Every library should have a good collection of books on local history, also prints, maps, photographs and plans of the district from early times to the present day. As all histories, local and national, are founded upon records, every endeavour should be made to collect the following material, as it is of great value to the historian, antiquary and genealogist.

It is urgently necessary that steps should be taken to secure and preserve for historical study such muniments from private collections as are in danger of destruction or dispersal owing to the sale of landed estates; and further, that co-operation between Public Libraries as well as university and kindred institutions engaged in historical research, is desirable for that purpose. The increased attention given to MSS. by librarians in recent years is surely a matter of great importance to students of history.

The increased attention given by the Historical Manuscripts Commission to record material in private collections is all the more gratifying, as this source is being wanted very urgently for the study of social and economic history.

This takes us to the local records, which are now regarded as of national importance. Their exploration cannot be too thorough, since for the history of local agricultural customs, it is not enough to collect one or two examples from one village. The individuality of English village life has always been very strong, and in no two villages will you find exactly the same customs. In fact, for the purposes of historical students, it is not too much to say that these collections are indispensable, and that where there are gaps in the records, there also will be gaps in our knowledge.

Every effort, therefore, should be made to prevent the destruction of records, and it is feared that the losses in the past have been immense. They may be of little legal value, but from a historical point of view they are invaluable. There should be a general recognition of the fact that the local Public Library is the natural repository for all ancient documents of local interest, and that the library authorities are willing to accept them as gifts, or to purchase them at a reasonable price. The transactions of the local record societies should be housed in the Public Library.

These records are the material of future books, the sources of the unwritten history of the nation, and it should be our aim to serve the future citizens of the town by devoting all our time, energy, tact and skill to collecting these records, and saving them from destruction.

Collections of manuscripts and local records may be acquired from various sources. They may be purchased a few at a time from secondhand booksellers, and a number are often given by individual donors. There is very often in many libraries a collection of MSS. on "permanent loan," i.e., lent by persons who are not in a position to give them, but who wish them to be of service to the public.

Students could be given opportunities of studying these MSS. in the Reference Room, and books could also be provided on law, social history, economics and other works of reference necessary for the study of the records.

When we come to consider the records of the district we are surprised at their extent. The most interesting ones are the written ones, such as wills, leases and similar works. These documents often throw a great deal of light on the changes, customs, manners and language of a locality more so than the printed records.

Of great importance in a local collection are the Parish Registers and Churchwardens' Accounts. These are always of great use to the genealogist.

All books by local authors must be collected, i.e., an author who was born or who has lived part of his life in the town, or one who has written about the locality. All the works of William Shakespeare should be in every Warwickshire Library, not only because he was such a genius but because his birthplace was Stratford-on-Avon; another reason is that many of his works are about the locality. The writings of public men, officials, public speakers, and sermons of the local clergy must all be found in the local collection.

The next important item is to collect everything published or written about the town, guide books, handbooks, histories, almanacks, in fact, anything with the slightest bearing on the district. The first known printed book with reference to Birmingham is "Nye's Almanack" for 1642.

All local newspapers, periodicals, commercial and street directories and gazetteers must be filed. The newspapers and periodicals should be collected, bound and indexed, and if there is a scarcity of room where the local collection is housed, they should be stored in an accessible place in the basement. These are of great use when compiling a history of the town, or in referring to any local event. With regard to the beginnings of the newspaper press in Birmingham, "The Birmingham Journal" was first published by Warren in 1732, and a photographic facsimile is preserved in the local collection of

that city. Aris's "Birmingham Gazette" began in 1741, and exists even to the present day, and an almost complete set has been placed in the library, and is an invaluable storehouse of the detailed history of the town. The first known Birmingham directory is a manuscript giving a list of names, including many Birmingham men, and was published in 1750.

Every library should possess a "Local Clippings Book," and any newspaper reference to the town or district should be pasted in it. A better method still is to paste the cuttings in manilla folders, having on the left hand top corner the class number, subject, source and date of clippings. The folders should then be filed in drawers in a cabinet, and this method dispenses with looking in two or three volumes of the old scrap book before one could find all the material on one subject. In many cases collections of newspaper cuttings are made by interested people of the district, who then present their work to the library, e.g., in the Birmingham collection there are a number of quarto volumes of cuttings from newspapers, chiefly due to the care of Mr. Sam Timmins; about fifty volumes of various sizes dealing mainly with the history of Handsworth and district, collected by Mr. G. H. Osborne, and many other instances. This information would not have been placed on permanent record had it not been for the enthusiasm of these local people.

All books should be collected that have been published or printed in the town, more especially those printed privately. The first two books printed in Birmingham were "A Sermon on the Martyrdom of King Charles I," printed and sold by Matthew Unwin, in 1717, and "A Loyal Oration composed by James Parkinson, Chief Master of the Free School of Birmingham," 1717.

Every effort should be made to collect every locally published magazine, whether it is of a school or an institution, party or club. All the reports of the Local Medical Officer of Health, Dispensaries, Hospitals, Poor Law Institutions, and any local charity must be kept and bound every year. Another important item that must not be forgotten is the magazine of every Church and Chapel of the district. If only a few pages deal with local affairs these should be withdrawn, collected and bound.

All the old minute books of the various societies in the town should be housed in the Public Library, e.g., Midland Arts Club; Dramatic and Literary Club; and the Clarendon Art Fellowship. These minute books are a few of those housed

in the Birmingham local collection. These records are thus placed in safe keeping and will prove of great interest and value to the coming generations.

All municipal records must be kept, e.g., old rate books, assessment registers and minute books of the Corporation. The local collection must also include all local acts, bye-laws, and reports of the expenditures of the various Committees.

All Parliamentary Acts dealing with the district must be carefully filed, e.g., such matter as relates to Canal Acts, Railways and Road Acts, as well as Turnpike Acts. A large collection of these Acts is in the Birmingham collection, the Road Acts dating from 1725 to the present day. This collection also contains many miscellaneous Parliamentary Acts bearing on the district, e.g., "For building a Parish Church and Parsonage House and making a new Church Yard and Parish in Birmingham to be called the Parish of St. Philip," 1708. Another example is: "For laying open and widening certain ways and passages in the town of Birmingham; and for cleansing and lighting the streets, lanes, ways and passages there, and for removing and preventing nuisances and obstructions therein." [The Lamp Act] 1769.

Papers relating to old law suits, tithes, enclosures, licenses, grants and charters, old title deeds, transfers of ownership, patents and manorial records are of the greatest importance, and should certainly form part of any local collection. Often in the past large sums of money have been spent by local authorities on law cases arising through the absence of sufficient information, and that expenditure could have been dispensed with had the material I have just mentioned been collected and housed in a public building for the benefit of the people. All deeds relating to the Guilds, Priories, Churches and any other religious house connected with the district must be collected. Many such deeds are kept in the Birmingham collection, chief among them being two deeds relating to the foundation of St. John's Church, documents of almost unique interest, having few parallels in the ecclesiastical history of the country.

All material relating to the political history of the town must be filed; reports of the meetings, debates, demonstrations and dealings of the Conservative, Liberal, and Labour parties, and any other party that may be in the town.

Any work dealing with the education of the district should be collected. The reports of the Director of Education and the Education Committee, as well as all matter relating to

each school in the town, their acts, documents, histories, lists of honours, school songs and magazines, should be carefully filed.

(To be continued).

## NOTES ON BOOKS AND AUTHORS

### III.

#### Mr. SHAW POINTS THE WAY.

By BENJAMIN C. JONES

(St. Pancras Public Library).

Soon after it was published, a copy of Shaw's "The Intelligent woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism" came into my hands, and for a week or more afterwards I was led through the wilderness of political economy by one who had spared no pains to make it certain that I should not lose my way. More than that, I emerged with a feeling that at last that wilderness had lost any terrors it had held for me, and my attention had been directed to certain truths which have gone a long way towards defining my attitude towards some of the social conditions under which we live.

The author has been known for over a quarter of a century as a writer with a peculiar genius for showing us ourselves as others see us. His attention has been primarily directed to the drama as a vehicle for the expression of his philosophy, but in their printed form the plays have been prefaced by essays which aim at making clear (in case you failed to get the point of the play) the opinion of the author on the particular matter in hand at the moment. The "Guide" recalls these prefaces vividly, and one would like to see a play appended to it—but Mr. Shaw is getting on in years now.

The aim of the work, as I gather, is to shew that Socialism, carried out on constitutional lines, is the logical and almost inevitable remedy for our present social evils. The author points out the achievements of capitalism, and maintains that they rest on insecure foundations, recalling many cases from economic history in witness of the fact. He decries anything in the nature of anarchy, but insists that a State governed on Socialist lines would be the highest and best form of political felicity attainable. The arguments in favour of equal monetary income for all are clear and forcible; but the mind becomes rather deeply involved when this condition is applied to cases within the reader's own circle of friends and interests. The question of public and private finance is dealt with at some length, and in my opinion really succeeds in giving the reader an adequate understanding of this complicated and important sphere of activity.

The book is written in a pleasant, almost conversational, manner, and the author presents the results of what must have been tremendous study and thought in a style easily understood by anybody who has not even the faintest knowledge of economics. Its cover is bright and cheerful, not at all suggesting the generally accepted opinion of political economy as being a dull study. The paper and printing are also good, and the bibliography at the end an extremely useful guide to the literature available.

I will not go so far as to say that I am altogether convinced by some of the arguments put forward, or that I think that the theories in prac-

tic would be workable. Like everything that Mr. Shaw writes, the work is provocative to a great degree, and therein I think, lies its value. Its explanations of the theory of political economy are lucid, and the author is absolutely convinced of the righteousness of his case.

I shall buy this book, and read it again. I shall collect knotty points which arise in the course of conversation, and see whether this book can give a satisfactory answer to them. Whether it can or cannot, however, after reading the book nobody could fail to take an interest in any institution which has for its object the alleviation of the distress which we see on every side.

## THE DIVISIONS.

### Yorkshire Division.

A most successful meeting of the Yorkshire Division was held at Halifax on Wednesday, the 21st November. The members, numbering about 40, assembled at the Central Public Library, Belle Vue, Halifax, at 3 p.m., where a welcome was extended by Alderman J. H. Waddington, J.P. In the course of his welcome, Alderman Waddington said that although Halifax was not a large town, yet it was one of considerable importance. Halifax claimed the credit of spending more money upon the educational side of its civic activities than any other town of the same population. Further, 25 per cent. of the population were borrowers at the public library. Mr. E. Green, the Chief Librarian of Halifax, also spoke a few words of welcome to the members present. Replying on behalf of the Division, Mr. G. W. Strother, Leeds, stated that we were all cognisant of the prestige of Halifax in the library world, and the high percentage of borrowers was largely due to the publicity methods of its Chief Librarian.

Motor buses were in attendance to convey the gathering to two of the new branch libraries, one of which had only been opened to the public on the previous day. These branch libraries were designed on rather different lines to the usual type; the cost of the structures had not exceeded £2,000 for each building. Simplicity, neatness, and economy appeared to be the predominant characteristics of the buildings, and by closing from 12 to 1.30 p.m., and from 4 to 5.30 p.m., it was possible for one assistant to manage each branch without any relief.

The Halifax Public Libraries Committee was responsible for the provision of an excellent tea, after which the evening meeting was opened in the Education Office. Miss M. M. Hummerston, Children's Librarian, Leeds, gave an extremely interesting and instructive address on "The new spirit in relation to junior libraries." Miss Hummerston compared the unsympathetic and even hostile spirit which prevailed fifteen years ago, with the movement which is now on foot to establish library work with the children. After relating in a delightful manner many of her experiences gleaned while working with children, Miss Hummerston described how in Leeds they had decided upon a regular syllabus, and found it worked very well. Children were told what they might expect in their story half-hours, and so popular were the talks, that there was scarcely sufficient accommodation for the children. Almost every day they had a class coming from the schools to read the books in the juvenile department. Also in summer they had talks with those about to leave school; these talks acquainted the children with the reference and commercial library, and resulted in many now being borrowers for the

adult departments. In the discussion which followed, the question of the "school atmosphere" induced by the fixed syllabus, was introduced, but any doubt upon this point was dispelled by Mr. W. Proctor, Leeds, who stated that the nature of the talks, the planning of the juvenile departments, the small round tables, pictures, statuary and flowers, entirely obviated any such atmosphere. Several members joined in the discussion, and a vote of thanks to Miss Hummerston was proposed and seconded by Miss Walker, Huddersfield, and Mr. E. Robertshaw, Bradford, respectively.

Mr. T. J. Kirkpatrick, of Bradford, next opened a discussion on "The new proposed bye-laws of the Library Association, and how they will affect the assistant." Mr. Kirkpatrick dealt with each of the proposals in a very clear and concise manner, he outlined what he thought to be the cause of each amendment, and what would probably be the effect. The discussion which followed drifted into an extremely lively one upon the question of "Amalgamation." The circular issued by the Hon. Sec. on the subject, was discussed, and after much debating, in the course of which many proposals were advanced and rejected, the approval of the action of the Council of the A.A.L. was granted, and it was unanimously decided to support the resolution of the Council upon amalgamation under the conditions set out in the Hon. Secretary's circular-letter.

The thanks of the members to Mr. Kirkpatrick for his paper were voiced by Mr. W. Proctor, Leeds, and Mr. H. Bateson, Leeds.

Much of the success of the meeting was due to Mr. E. Green, the Chief Librarian of Halifax, and the Halifax Public Libraries Committee, Mr. T. W. Muskett, Huddersfield, and Mr. G. W. Strother, expressed the indebtedness of the members for the excellent accommodation and facilities so readily and willingly provided.

[*The Editor regrets that this report, although received in time for printing in last month's issue, had to be delayed through lack of space.*]

#### South-Western Division.

Wednesday, February 13th:—

2.45.—Assemble at Central Library, Bournemouth.

3.0—Visit to the Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Generating Station.

5.0.—Tea, by invitation of the Bournemouth staff.

6.0.—Committee Meeting.

6.30.—General Meeting in the Music Library, with an address on a literary topic, by the Rev. H. Maddeford, a well-known local speaker.

HECTOR MOURANT, Hon. Sec.

#### Midland Division.

The second meeting of the session was held at the Reference Library, Birmingham, on December 5th, 1928, when a fine series of papers,\* arranged by Mr. H. Woodbine, was read on "Printing up to the year 1500."

The Chairman of the Public Libraries Committee, Mr. Councillor Simmons, proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Woodbine and the readers of the papers, which was seconded by Mr. G. L. Burton (Librarian, Ward End Branch Library). Mr. Woodbine replied.

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\*A useful precis of this interesting series will be included in next month's issue.

The selection of early printed books, manuscripts, etc., from the Reference Library were lent by kind permission of the City Librarian, Mr. H. M. Cashmore.

The business meeting which followed the reading of the papers resolved: "That this Division re-affirms its previous resolution and also asks that immediate and adequate steps be taken to ensure the removal of the injustice to assistant librarians, who have received their training in "other than recognised Schools of Librarianship," which exists in the registration clause of the new bye-laws of the Library Association.

This Division considers that an essential preliminary to registration is examination of all candidates by the Library Association; only in this manner can equation be secured.

The Division disassociates itself with the action of the Council in its endeavour to secure equation on lower standards, and further submits that approval to the new bye-laws by the Privy Council does not deprive the Association of its right of protest.

Further resolved: "That copies of the above resolution be forwarded to the A.A.L. Council and all Divisional Secretaries, asking for their energetic support to the resolution."

V. Woods.

## OUR LIBRARY.

Philip (Alex. J.) and Gadd (W. Laurance) *A Dickens Dictionary*. 2nd edition (revised and enlarged) illustrated. 7½ in. by 9½ in.; pp. xxii., 375; 21/- net. Cloth. Gravesend: "The Librarian," or London: Simpkin Marshall, Ltd.

All Dickens lovers should welcome the new edition of Mr. Philip's "A Dickens Dictionary," first published in 1909. The form is similar to the old edition, but the "Index to originals" has been compiled afresh, and each entry annotated, which adds very considerably to its value. It was a happy thought to amplify the index to the originals of the characters and places depicted in the novels, and this will have a fascination for most readers.

The arrangement of the text is in the form of an alphabetical index of characters and scenes in the novels and miscellaneous works, with the exception of the "Child's History of England" and "Dickens' Letters." Chapter references are given under each entry, and under those of any importance there is a brief description, sometimes supplemented in the case of characters by a note giving the connection with plot or historical origin.

Mr. Philip has included in this edition his "Introduction to the First Edition," which perhaps, is to be regretted, as it expresses opinions with which all may not agree. Mr. Philip "wonders where the vivid, compelling charm of Dickens lies in his works!!" "Obviously it is not in the beauty of the language!!" "There is none of that limpid poetry in prose which gives a fascination to the lines of some authors."

Dickens was an acknowledged master of prose, but in a sense which needs qualification. He cannot compare with Thackeray for flow of pure idiom, but he made unique use of the English language, and his style must be examined as one of the justifications of his place in literature. He phrased with vigour, with variety and with a soundness of construction which he owed to his 18th century studies. The gravest of his faults (in spite of Mr. Philip) and he never wholly overcame it—was a habit of writing metrically.

A good many years since, a magazine article was written entitled "Dickens as a poet," the absurd aim of which was to show, admiringly,

how many pages from the novels could be read as blank verse. The fact unfortunately, cannot be disputed. Dickens wrote thus under the influence of strong emotion. He was aware of the tendency, spoke of it as something which he could not help and was not disturbed by it. But this slight digression does not detract from the excellence of "A Dickens Dictionary," which should find a place in every good reference library, and is recommended, after close examination, without reservation.

W. J. H.

*Smith (J. Russell) Geography and our need of it. (Reading with a Purpose Series.) pp. 43; A.L.A.*

Two of the important books recommended are, we gladly notice, Huntingdon's "Human Habitat," and Bowman's "The New World."

*Dutt (Newton Mohun) Baroda and its Libraries. pp. 191; 6½ in. by 9½ in.; boards; Baroda Central Library.*

The author, who is a Fellow of the Library Association and Curator of the State Libraries, has made an extremely valuable and interesting book out of his experience at Baroda, and the library activities of that very progressive State. The book, which is well illustrated and lucidly written, describes in detail the libraries of Baroda and the methods used there. It is, in its way, a manual of library economy, showing the organisation of the central and travelling libraries, the rules drawn up to ensure their good management, and the provision made for students and children. H.H. The Maharaja Gaekwad must be one of the most remarkable men of his time, and the library system which exists to-day in Baroda as the permanent and incontestable record of his benevolent enthusiasm for literary culture and wise government would put to shame that of many European countries. His Highness has been well served in his librarians, and this manual should do much to arouse that powerful envy which often leads to emulative activity.

An important part of the library movement in Baroda is the agency for imparting visual instruction to the illiterate masses, the libraries of course, being free to all persons "young and old, rich and poor, of every caste and creed." The staff consists of "a Curator, the Assistant Curator, five Librarians, a head clerk, 16 clerks, a cinema operator, a bookbinder with two assistants, and 20 menials."

F. S. S.

## SHORT NOTICES.

**Coventry Readers' Bulletin.** Vol. 7, No. 1.

A model bulletin, distinguished by its careful catalogue entries for latest additions, which themselves are altogether admirable.

**Halifax Readers' Guide,** December, 1928.

**Lancashire County Libraries.** Handbook of Library Facilities.

This 28-page pamphlet is a piece of business-like publicity which will, we imagine, fully justify itself. Herein are described fully and lucidly the activities, the rules governing them, and the facilities, of the County Library System in Lancashire. The pamphlet should be seen by everybody interested in rural schemes, particularly by the County Councillors who are responsible for their management.

### Leeds Commercial and Technical Library. Bulletin.

The December issue of the Leeds Commercial Library Bulletin is of the greatest interest. The brief record herein given of some of the activities of this branch of work more than justifies the money and time spent on it. It is a pity the bulletin is cyclostyled and has such an unattractively printed heading, for we feel its contents to be so important that they deserve the permanence of print and the dignity of a well-composed and attractively set up heading.

### Leyton Public Libraries. Leaflets on Books and the Library.

We are glad to welcome Leyton's return to an active life, and wish the new Librarian success in his difficult task.

### Norwich Readers' Guide. January to March.

An excellent number containing, appropriately enough, an article on, and a portrait of, R. H. Mottram, who is a native of Norwich.

### St. Helens. Fiftieth Annual Report.

Total issue : 322,641; Daily average : 1,091; Readers' Tickets : 13,837; Total stock : 55,391; Total expenditure : £4,183.

### Walthamstow Public Libraries : [an eight-page pamphlet.]

A useful piece of publicity which we hope will be distributed to every householder in the district.

Bulletins are also acknowledged with thanks from Port Elizabeth, Indianapolis, St. Louis, and the American Library Association.

### The Library Review—Winter Number. (Annual Subscription, 8/-, The Atlas Works, Coatbridge).

*Contents* : Bookish America, by Dr. A. E. Bostwick; the Child's Book and the Reviewer, by L. Y. Erskine; The South African Library position, by Percy Freer; County Library Work in a Village; Mediæval Encyclopædias, by E. E. Willoughby; and some notable poetical anthologies.

### Libraries : a Monthly Review. December, 1928. (Chicago).

### Library Journal, December, 1928. (New York).

### Wilson Bulletin : a Magazine for Librarians. December, 1928.

### The Countryman. January, 1929. (2/6 net, quarterly. Idbury, Kingham, Oxford).

*Contents* : From Civil Servant to Farmer; my adventures as a tramp and a thief (i.); Babble about old cottages; From the hunting field to the air; My six years' farming (iii.), etc.

A hundred and thirty pages of well-written brevities on the countryside, its hopes and fears; on the countryman, his past (occasionally), his present and his future. The "tramp" article is fine, and the articles on hunting and on old country cottages are distinguished, as may be imagined, by that particular and powerful brand of sanity and that lack of sentimentality which does not stultify itself by descending to exaggerated rhetoric.

## NEW MEMBERS:

*Associate.*—Sidney Wm. Anderson (Croydon).

*(Alteration).*—Miss F. Scattergood, of Stretford, *not* Manchester.

*Eastern Counties Division.*—*Associates*: Frank Bate, Henry Brooks (Norwich).

*Members.*—Alice Cooper, Rose Morris, Dorothy Oxbury (Norwich); Miss Protheroe (Norfolk County).

## NEW APPOINTMENTS.

\*CARVER, ARTHUR LLEWELLYN, Sub-Librarian, Great Western Institute, Swindon, to be Chief Assistant, Portsmouth. Six L.A. Certificates (Sect. I. "with merit"). Salary: £220—£260 per annum, by £10 increments. (Also selected: \*L. C. Jackson, Chesterfield).

\*WATKINS, A. H., Senior Assistant, Gainsborough, to be Senior Assistant, Teddington. Four L.A. Certificates, A.L.A. Salary: £150—£200, by £10 increments.

\*Member of the Association of Assistant Librarians.

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